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COTTON FIELDS

Like nets of brown, by fisher folk
  Spread out to dry in wind and sun,
While in the harbor idly wait
  The boats for schools of fish to run:

So lie the ripened cotton fields
  Along the slopes. The sun has browned
And curled their leaves; the rows stretch out
  Enlaced with knots along the ground.

Above the rough red field of earth
  Soft flecks of white droop from the bolls.
Far off the groups of pickers loom
  Like burdened, disembodied souls—

Detached but not released, who haunt
  The fields and hover near the soil:
Gray gleaners in the weary rows,
  Entangled in an endless toil.

Madeline Yale Wynne